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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY  
INFO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 176853

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TAGS: PREL AF PK

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN'S POLITICAL FUTURE

REF: (A)STATE 175414 (NOTAL), (B)ISLAMABAD 5601

(U) CLASSIFIED BY: CHRISTINA B. ROCCA, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS; REASON: 1.5 (B AND D).

¶1. (C) ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD DRAW FROM POINTS BELOW IN DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS REGARDING U.S. VIEWS ON THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN. NOTING SPECIFICALLY THAT THESE ARE PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS, ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD REQUEST HOST COUNTRY INPUT. EMBASSY ISLAMABAD HAS MADE A SIMILAR APPROACH (REF A) TO THE GOP BUT MAY USE THESE EXPANDED POINTS TO AMPLIFY ITS DISCUSSION.

¶2. (C) BACKGROUND:

-- AFGHANISTAN'S STABILITY IS PREDICATED UPON HAVING A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT TERRORIST TIES, FRIENDLY TO ITS NEIGHBORS, AND ENGAGED IN OVERLL REGIONAL COOPERATION AND ECONOMIC REHABILITATION. A FUTURE GOVERNMENT WILL LIKELY EMERGE FROM THE "SUPREME COUNCIL" UNDER FORMER KING ZAHIR SHAH'S SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP WITH NORTHERN ALLIANCE, MAJOR ETHNIC, PARTICULARLY PASHTUN, AND SECTARIAN GROUPS.

AFGHANISTAN WILL NEED INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE WITH A SECURITY ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD PROVIDE STABILITY FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY, INCLUDING HOLDING KABUL AND OTHER URBAN AREAS, AND PROTECT THE GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE WORKERS FROM THOSE THAT SEEK TO CONTINUE THE CONFLICT.

-- AFGHANS WILL NEED HELP TO FORM A GOVERNMENT THAT IN COOPERATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN CLOSE DOWN TERRORISTS OPERATIONS, ADHERES TO INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND PRACTICES, PARTICULARLY HUMAN RIGHTS, ISSUES CONCERNING WOMEN, AND FACILITATES SAFE DELIVERY OF HUMANITARIAN AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. CONSULTATIONS WITH COALITION PARTNERS, PARTICULARLY ISLAMIC COUNTRIES AND REGIONAL STATES, WILL BE IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING AND IMPLEMENTING A SECURITY ARRANGMENT THAT WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THE "SUPREME COUNCIL" AND A FUTURE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT.

¶3. (C) TALKING POINTS:

-- WITH EVENTS MOVING RAPIDLY, WE BELIEVE IT IMPERATIVE TO DISCUSS THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN. WE ANTICIPATE MANY FUTURE, DETAILED EXCHANGES OF VIEWS ON THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC AS EVENTS PROCEED.

-- WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT WE DO NOT INTEND TO, NOR DO WE BELIEVE WE COULD, DETERMINE THIS FUTURE.

-- AS YOU KNOW WE ARE PROVIDING HUMANITARIAN AID TO COMBAT THE PRESENT CRISIS. WE AND OTHER COUNTRIES MADE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNSYG'S EMERGENCY APPEAL, BUT THERE IS STILL MORE TO BE DONE. WE ARE ALSO LOOKING AT HOW THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, COULD WORK TO REBUILD THE ECONOMY IN A FUTURE AFGHANISTAN.

-- USG WELCOMES APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR LAKHDAR BRAHIMI AS SECRETARY GENERAL'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR AFGHANISTAN AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM. WE EXPECT TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM IN THE NEAR FUTURE REGARDING UN ROLE IN BRINGING PEACE AND STABILITY TO AFGHANISTAN. WE ENCOURAGE PAKISTANI CONTACTS WITH HIM AS WELL.

-- WE BELIEVE YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF AFGHANISTAN. WE WELCOME INCREASED DIALOGUE WITH THE FORMER KING AND BROADENED CONTACTS WITH AFGHANS TO ENCOURAGE ANTI-TALEBAN UNITY.

-- WE HAVE ALSO BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE FORMER KING AT A HIGH LEVEL AND EXPECT TO BE ENGAGING IN SIMILAR DISCUSSIONS WITH BOTH THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE AND OTHER INDEPENDENT AFGHANS, PARTICULARLY PASHTUNS, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE AFGHANISTAN. WE WELCOME THE FORMATION OF A SUPREME COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL UNITY OF AFGHANISTAN COMBINING THE ROME GROUP WITH THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE AND OTHER AFGHAN GROUPS.

-- WE ARE LOOKING AT PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ROME GROUP TO DEFRAY IMMEDIATE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

-- ULTIMATELY, IT IS UP TO THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE. THAT SAID, WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN GENERALLY ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES WHICH ANY GOVERNMENT WILL NEED TO ADHERE TO. IT WILL NEED TO BE BROAD-BASED, MULTI-ETHNIC, AND GENERALLY REPRESENTATIVE, RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS, END ALL SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM, AND FOLLOW ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOR.

-- BY DEFINITION, ANY TRANSITION OR FUTURE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT BE COMPOSED OF JUST ONE AFGHAN FACTION. TO BE SPECIFIC, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE ALONE COULD OR SHOULD RULE AFGHANISTAN GIVEN ITS LIMITED ETHNIC COMPOSITION. THE NA WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE A ROLE IN ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT, AS SHOULD OTHER SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF AFGHAN SOCIETY.

-- WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT AFGHANISTAN'S NEIGHBORS HAVE LEGITIMATE NATIONAL INTERESTS IN AFGHANISTAN. WE BELIEVE THAT ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE THOSE INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT. PAKISTAN DOES NOT WANT TO BE FACED WITH A HOSTILE AFGHANISTAN WITH TERRITORIAL CLAIMS. IRAN WANTS THE SHI'A PROTECTED AND NO DRUGS. PAKISTAN AND IRAN WANT REFUGEES TO RETURN HOME. UZBEKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN, AND TAJIKISTAN WANT PEACEFUL BORDERS.

-- WE WOULD NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ALSO HAVE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS IN THE FUTURE POLITICAL SETUP IN AFGHANISTAN. WE DO NOT SEE ANY IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT AMONG THESE INTERESTS AS LONG AS AFGHANS AND OUTSIDE INTERESTS ARE FLEXIBLE.

-- WE HAVE MADE THESE POINTS TO OUR AFGHAN CONTACTS.

-- YOUR COOPERATION IS VITAL AND WELCOMED ON ALL FRONTS. WE EXPECT TO BE IN FREQUENT CONTACT WITH YOU ON THIS TOPIC AND WELCOME YOUR VIEWS.

**14. (C) BELOW ADDRESSEES SHOULD ADD THE FOLLOWING POINTS:**

FOR SIX PLUS TWO MEMBERS:

-- YOUR COUNTRY, ALONG WITH AFGHANISTAN'S OTHER NEIGHBORS, HAS LEGITIMATE NATIONAL INTERESTS IN AFGHANISTAN THAT NEED

TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. YOUR COOPERATION IS VITAL TO THE  
EMERGENCE OF A FUTURE PEACEFUL, STABLE AFGHANISTAN.  
-- WE ARE CONSIDERING WHEN AND AT WHAT LEVEL THE SIX PLUS  
TWO MIGHT MEET TO DISCUSS THESE ISSUES.

FOR EMBASSY NEW DELHI:

-- INDIA HAS A LONG HISTORY WITH AFGHANISTAN AS WELL AS KEY  
INTERESTS THAT NEED TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. INDIA, LIKE  
PAKISTAN, SHOULD NOT BE FACED WITH A HOSTILE AFGHANISTAN.

-- INDIA'S COOPERATION IS VITAL AND WELCOMED. WE ANTICIPATE  
A DIALOGUE WITH INDIA ON REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THIS  
TOPIC AS THE SITUATION DEVELOPS.

FOR EMBASSY TOKYO:

-- VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR STRONG INTEREST IN THE  
ECONOMICA AND POLITICAL FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN.

-- WE VALUE OUR BILATERAL EXCHANGES ON THIS ISSUE, BOTH IN  
TOKYO AND IN WASHINGTON, AS WELL AS ON THE MARGINS OF RECENT  
MEETINGS IN BERLIN AND GENEVA.

-- WE ALSO THINK YOUR SUPPORT FOR PAKISTAN AS IT GRAPPLES  
WITH ITS ECONOMIC NEEDS IS VERY HELPFUL, ESPECIALLY AS  
PRESIDENT MUSHARRAF HAS BEEN TAKING RISKS DOMESTICALLY BY  
JOINING OUR INTERNATIONAL COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM.

-- WE VIEW YOU AS AN INTEGRAL PARTNER AS WE FOCUS ON AN  
ASSISTANCE AND POLITICAL/ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN FOR A FUTURE  
AFGHANISTAN.

MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

POWELL